

**This is an official
MS Health Alert Network (HAN) Advisory Update**

MESSAGE ID: MSHAN-20140522-00101-ADV (Health Advisory)
RECIPIENTS: All Physicians, Hospitals, and Healthcare Providers - Statewide
DATE: Wednesday, May 22, 2014

***SUBJECT: Updated Guidance, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome
Coronavirus (MERS-CoV), May 2014***

Dear Colleagues,

On May 2, 2014 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed the first imported case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) infection in the United States in a recent traveler from Saudi Arabia to Indiana. On May 11, 2014 a second travel-associated MERS case was confirmed in the US, in a traveler from Saudi Arabia to Florida with no connection to the first case. Additionally, on May 16, 2014 the CDC reported that an Illinois resident, a close contact to the first US case, had evidence of apparent past MERS-CoV infection by antibody testing. Initial RT-PCR testing was negative for this individual. The Illinois resident did not have a history of recent travel outside of the US. The investigation is ongoing, but the results do suggest this person may have been infected as a result of close contact to first US case. The Illinois resident did not seek or require medical care but was identified through contact investigation of the first case.

While there is a very low risk to the general public in the US, there is a potential for further travel-associated cases in individuals with recent travel to the Arabian Peninsula or in close contacts to an ill traveler from the Arabian Peninsula.

Mississippi Healthcare providers should consider MERS-CoV infection in any patient who meets the following criteria:

- A. Has fever and pneumonia or acute respiratory distress syndrome (based on clinical or radiologic evidence) AND EITHER:**
- history of travel from countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula within 14 days before symptom onset OR
 - close contact with a symptomatic traveler who developed fever and acute respiratory illness (not necessarily pneumonia) within 14 days after traveling from countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula) OR
 - is a member of a cluster of patients with severe acute respiratory illness (e.g., fever and pneumonia requiring hospitalization) of unknown etiology in which MERS-CoV is being evaluated in consultation with state or local health department (more details below); OR,
- B. Is a close contact of a confirmed or probable case of MERS**

***This message is being distributed to you via the Mississippi State Department of Health
- Health Alert Network (✉ HANhelp@msdh.state.ms.us ☎ 601-576-7725)***

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MSDH is requesting that any suspected case of MERS-CoV infection be reported to the Office of Epidemiology within 24 hours of first knowledge or suspicion.

Standard, contact and airborne precautions should be instituted for any hospitalized patient with known or suspected MERS-CoV infection. Some of the key precautions are:

- patient placement in an Airborne Infection Isolation Room (AIIR)
- proper precautions with aerosol generating procedures
- hand hygiene
- proper use of personal protective equipment for HCP, to include:
 - gloves
 - gowns
 - eye protection (goggles or face shield)
 - respiratory protection with fit tested N95 respirator

The full Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Hospitalized Patients with MERS are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/infection-prevention-control.html>

The Mississippi Public Health Laboratory (MPHL) has the capacity to perform MERS-CoV testing by RT-PCR on a number of specimen types including lower respiratory specimens, nasopharyngeal/oropharyngeal specimens, and serum. The MPHL MERS-CoV Specimen Submission Guidelines are available at www.HealthyMS.com/MERS

Prior authorization must be arranged with the MSDH Office of Epidemiology before specimens will be accepted for submission and testing.

See the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/index.html> for updates and guidance for healthcare professionals. You may also see the MSDH website at www.HealthyMS.com/MERS for updates and information.

To report a suspect case or arrange for clinical testing, please contact MSDH Epidemiology at (601) 576-7725 during normal business hours or (601)576-7400 after hours.

Sincerely,

Thomas Dobbs, MD, MPH
State Epidemiologist
Mississippi State Department of Health

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Alerting Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: Mississippi State Department of Health
Alerting Program: MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)
Message Identifier: MSHAN-20140503-00361-ADV
Program (HAN) Type: Health Advisory
Status (Type): Actual ()
Message Type: Alert
Reference: CDCHAN-00361
Severity: Unknown
Acknowledgement: No
Sensitive: Not Sensitive
Message Expiration: Undetermined
Urgency: Undetermined
Delivery Time: 600 minutes

Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.
Alerting Program: The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.
Message Identifier: A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT (**ALT=Health Alert**, **ADV=Health Advisory**, **UPD=Health Update**, **MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service**)).
Program (HAN) Type: Categories of Health Alert Messages.
Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.
Health Info Service: Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.
Status (Type):
 Actual: Communication or alert refers to a live event
 Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert

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Test: Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded

Message Type:

Alert: Indicates an original Alert
Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

Reference: For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

Severity:

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe: Significant threat to life or property
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

Acknowledgement: Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

Sensitive:

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

Message Expiration: Undetermined.

Urgency: Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

Delivery Time: Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).

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